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NECESSITY OF ENDING THE ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL EMBARGO IMPOSED BY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AGAINST CUBA

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-seventh year

Letter dated 24 April 1992 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba in response to a statement made by the President of the United States on 18 April 1992 concerning my country (see annex).

I request you to arrange for this letter and its annex to be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under item 39 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ricardo ALARCON de QUESADA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Cuba
to the United Nations

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ANNEX

Statement issued on 22 April 1992 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba

On 18 April 1992 George Bush made a statement in which he reaffirmed his intention to tighten even further the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

The statement comes at a time when criticism of this hostile policy is becoming more pronounced than ever before among broad sectors of world public opinion, one of the main purposes of the statement being to hamper the efforts of those who oppose that policy.

It is odd that, at a time when opposition to the United States embargo against Cuba is gathering force among men, women and official and non-governmental organizations representing the most diverse currents of opinion, the President of the United States should make a statement in which he takes so opposite a position.

The facts are so obvious that even officials of the Washington Government have admitted to them in their public remarks.

A recent example is the statement made by a representative of the State Department, Mr. Robert Gelbard, at a hearing conducted in the United States Congress on 8 April.

On that occasion, Gelbard told the legislators that "some Governments" agreed that Cuba should not receive any aid, but that "very few" favoured the imposition of what he called an embargo on the island.

The growing attention paid by world public opinion to this matter was also highlighted towards the end of 1991, when the United Nations General Assembly decided at its forty-sixth session to include in its agenda an item entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba".

As everyone is aware, this item will be open for discussion at the meetings of the General Assembly's session this year.

One of the arguments advanced last year by the United States delegation to the United Nations in its attempt to prevent inclusion of the item in the agenda was that the issue was one of a bilateral embargo - consistent with the provisions of international law - and not a blockade.

Even though there are numerous United States provisions currently in force and from years past which demonstrate conclusively how the White House has been trying to extend its jurisdiction beyond its own territory in order

to impose its laws, orders and regulations on Cuba. Bush's most recent pronouncement on the subject is of singular significance in this context.

The President makes no attempt to conceal his intention of imposing on Cuba a political, economic and social order which is consistent with Washington's interests, while, without shrinking from hinting at reprisals against countries which do not toe this line, he casts himself in the role of leader of a crusade in which "my administration will continue to stress to the Governments of the entire world" the necessity of isolating the island economically.

In this context and without the slightest moral - or diplomatic, for that matter - hesitation, Bush proclaimed his intention of violating the recognized principle of freedom of the seas when he stated that he had instructed the Department of the Treasury to issue regulations prohibiting vessels engaging in trade with Cuba from entering United States ports.

The United States chief executive has thus openly violated the internationally recognized rules of law in accordance with which no State may employ pressure, coercion or any other actions in restraint of free merchant shipping and freedom of navigation.

This aggressive stance, together with other foreign policy actions in the early years of the 1990s, is a further indication of how the United States Government understands the so-called new world order, while at the same time it sounds a warning that Washington may be seeking to mount a naval blockade against Cuba which would have incalculable consequences.

And this is happening precisely at a time when in many places around the world in a massive, fraternal joining together of people of all races and beliefs, people are pledging their willingness to stand by Cuba's side to send - as the promoters have said - an oil tanker or a ship carrying medicines or powdered milk to our people who are stoically bearing the brunt of a double embargo, especially the embargo which Bush is seeking to tighten further in the name of opening a channel between us and the so-called "peaceful transition to democracy".

The United States President knows that the ships which he is trying to prevent from reaching Cuba are carrying foodstuffs and medicines for the Cuban people and supplies needed, inter alia, to provide electric lighting in our homes, to harvest the sugar crop or to keep the school system functioning.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cuba believes that the statement by the President of the United States in which the ideas described above were put forward has undoubtedly performed the service of highlighting the brutal reality of the economic, trade and financial embargo against our country, and at the same time it has shown the President to be a public instigator of illegal actions violating time-honoured legal norms observed by civilized Governments and nations.